

Bamidbar Chapter 14 - Transcript

Shiur Overview

Summary: Bamidbar Chapter 14 — The People's Rebellion, Moshe's Intercession, and the Failed Ascent

Context and Structure

Chapters 13 and 14 form a single continuous narrative — the story of the Meraglim. The chapter division is somewhat arbitrary. Chapter 13 covered the spies' mission and their two-stage report; chapter 14 deals with the people's response and its aftermath.

The People's Response (14:1–4)

The people raised their voices and wept loudly through the night. This crying is not mere sadness — it is loud, vocal complaint. The text emphasizes **kol ha'eida** (the important, counted members of the congregation) and **kol Bnei Yisrael** (everyone without exception) are united in complaint. This distinguishes this episode from earlier ones: previously the **asafusuf** complained, or Moshe, Aharon, and Miriam had issues — here **everyone** shares the same grievance. Even the 70 elders from the previous narrative should be assumed to be complaining.

The complaint constitutes a fundamental challenge to the entire plan of the Exodus: leaving Egypt, traveling through the wilderness, and entering the Land. They say they would have been better off dying in Egypt or even in the wilderness. Their wives and children will become spoils of war. Most radically, they propose: "**Nitna rosh**" — let us appoint a new leader and return to Egypt.

Moshe and Aharon's Non-Response (14:5)

Moshe and Aharon fall on their faces — either in despair or in prayer. A key pattern emerges: **when the challenge is weak, Moshe and Aharon have answers; when the challenge is strong, they have no response and wait for Hashem**. This is one of those strong challenges. If the people genuinely believe the military situation is hopeless, Moshe and Aharon cannot simply argue otherwise — they weren't the ones who scouted the land.

Yehoshua and Calev's Counter-Report (14:6–9)

The only people with standing to challenge the spies' report are Yehoshua and Calev, because they were part of the scouting mission. Their response has two components:

1. **They tear their clothing** — participating in the grief of Moshe and Aharon, signaling that what is happening is a form of blasphemy (paralleling the halakha of tearing one's garment upon hearing God's name cursed).

2. **They offer a counter-narrative**: The land is exceedingly good (**tova ha'aretz me'od me'od**). This isn't disputed — even the other spies acknowledged the land's goodness. But the crucial argument is theological: "**Im chafetz banu Hashem**" — if Hashem desires us, He will bring us there. The power that will conquer the land is Hashem, not Israel's

military strength. Therefore: do not rebel against Hashem, and do not fear the inhabitants.

The phrase "**sar tzilam mei'aleihem**" — "their shade/protection has departed from them" — is a striking image. Shade (**tzel**) consistently represents protection in the Torah. Yehoshua and Calev are saying the Canaanites are fully exposed, unprotected. There is an interesting midrashic connection to the earlier discussion of **etz** (trees) in the spies' mission. The point is not merely that Hashem will override reality — rather, **if you look with eyes of faith rather than rebellion, you can actually see that these peoples have no real protection**. It is a different way of reading the same evidence.

The People's Rejection and Hashem's Appearance (14:10)

The people want to stone Yehoshua and Calev. At this point, **Kevod Hashem** appears at the Ohel Moed before all of Israel — similar to the earlier episode with Miriam. Hashem is signaling: I am here, I have heard everything.

Hashem's Anger (14:11–12)

Hashem speaks to Moshe (not to the people) expressing frustration: "**Ad ana yena'atzuni ha'am hazeh?**" — How long will this people blaspheme Me? How long will they not trust Me despite all the signs I have performed? The argument is: I took you out of Egypt, I brought you through the wilderness — how much more must I do before you trust that the next step will also work?

Hashem proposes destroying the people with a plague and making Moshe into a greater nation — the same offer as at the Golden Calf.

Moshe's Intercession (14:13–19)

Moshe argues against Hashem using a powerful rhetorical strategy that mirrors and inverts the very logic at play in the story:

- The Egyptians will hear that Hashem killed His own people.
- The Egyptians will tell the Canaanites (**yoshvei ha'aretz hazot** — interestingly, Moshe speaks as if already in the Land).
- Everyone already knows Hashem is with Israel — the cloud by day, the fire by night, the visible divine protection.
- If Hashem now destroys them, the nations will conclude: "**Mibelti yecholet Hashem**" — Hashem lacked the ability to bring them to the Land, so He slaughtered them in the wilderness as an excuse.

This argument brilliantly turns the situation around: **Yehoshua and Calev told the people not to say the Canaanites are stronger than Hashem; now Moshe tells Hashem that destroying Israel would confirm exactly that claim in the eyes of the nations**. The Meraglim said the Canaanites are stronger than God; if God kills the people in the desert, the nations will say **exactly*

Bamidbar Chapter 14: The People's Rebellion and Moshe's Intercession

Introduction: Structure and Context

So here we are learning Bamidbar chapter 14, the second part, second half of the story of the Meraglim [the spies]. It's quite a long chapter. We'll try to summarize what is going on in it.

As we've said in the previous chapter, which is the first half of the story, these two chapters in some sense could have made a chapter in the middle here before the story of the Ma'apilim [those who went up presumptuously]. In any case, these two chapters are totally part of one story. There's no real reason to divide it this way. You might think of other ways to divide the story.

What we've had before was the Meraglim's return, right? After the whole story of the command of Temush [the scouting mission], the action of the Meraglim to go to Eretz Israel to check it out, the Meraglim's return, and two levels, two steps of their report. First, they gave a simple report, and then they started a conversation whether they will manage to conquer the land. And then they gave their sort of narrative, their sort of personal impression of how they're weak relative to the people there.

The People's Response: Universal Complaint

And there we're getting the response of the people to this report, to this really nice narrative that they got. And the response was very sad. They raised their voices and they cried. They cried and cried doesn't mean just like they had tears, they were sad. It's something like they complained very loudly, they cried out.

And they complained on Moshe and Aharon and all of them, **Kol Bnei Yisrael** [all the children of Israel], all the people, **Kol HaEidah** [all the congregation]. I've said that HaEidah I think means the important people, the people who count in the congregation. Kol Bnei Yisrael means everyone. They're all having the same complaint.

So although different than the previous stories where there are Asafsaf [rabble] complaints and then Moshe and Aharon and Miriam had complaints, here everyone has the same complaint. It doesn't of course talk about Aharon and Miriam, but everyone had complaints. We should assume that all the 70 leaders from the previous story, they're all complaining.

The Content of the Complaint

And what are they complaining? That this whole plan, this is really a challenge to the whole plan of Moshe taking them out of Mitzrayim [Egypt], bringing them to the Midbar [wilderness], bringing them to [Eretz] Yisrael. They said this whole plan was a bad plan, we should have died in Mitzrayim, we should have even died in the Midbar on the way. We're just going to die now, to fall by the sword. We're going to die in war. Our children, our wives will become prizes of war that will be taken by the enemy. It's even worse, it would have been better for us to be in Mitzrayim.

And they literally start speaking one to another, let's — how about we make a new leadership, we create a new leader and we go back to Mitzrayim.

Moshe and Aharon's Non-Response

And this is a very serious challenge and Moshe and Aharon don't have a response. As we've seen now, this is the first time and then later in the same similar later, Moshe and Aharon

don't really have responses to the good challenges. The weak challenges, they have responses. When there's a good challenge, they don't answer, they wait for Hashem to answer for them.

So what Moshe and Aharon do is they fall on their face before Hashem. This is what it means, if they fall to their face, like they're giving up in front of them, or it might mean a kind of prayer. They're saying, we don't really have a response. Like if you really think that there's no way, we should have maybe even died on the way, you know, on thirst or something, it's all better than dying in war and having our children being taken captive and slaves and so on. We don't really have an answer.

Yehoshua and Calev's Counter-Report

But the only people that have an answer, that get involved in the discussion here, are the two of the Meraglim, Yehoshua ben Nun and Calev ben Yefuneh, who are one of the Meraglim, they seem to have, they feel the right to challenge, right? Because now every Moshe and Aharon, they're getting this report, everyone is hearing their report, nobody's assuming they're lying, right? Even the prophet doesn't say they're lying. They narrated the story badly, they said the bad things about it, but nobody said that they lied. So the only people that had a real chance of challenging them are Yehoshua and Calev, who are from the group of Meraglim, they were there.

Tearing Their Clothing

And what do they do? Firstly, they rip their clothing. In other words, they're participating in Moshe and Aharon and being at a loss here. They're saying, this is horrible what's going on, this is not okay. And then, so that's step one.

Their Theological Argument

Then step two is that they speak to the people and they disagree, they challenge that report. They say, this is not true. Firstly, the land that we went to check out is great land. And of course, remember, this is not something they ever challenged. Everyone agreed that the land, as far as the land, is a good person, is a good land. Of course, they said in their second step of their report, they said, it's a hard land that eats its people that live in it, its inhabitants, but it doesn't necessarily differently disagree, this is just a different emphasis, right? They're saying, let's go back to the beginning, it's a good land.

But you're afraid, so then here, they're answering, Yehoshua and Calev's answer is Hashem. It's in the name of Hashem. If Hashem will want us, He will bring us this place, He will give it to us, it's a great land, it's **chalav u'dvash** [milk and honey]. Just do not rebel against Hashem, because Hashem is the power that's going to help us. If you rebel against Hashem, then maybe you're right. But if you go with Hashem, if Hashem will want us, if Hashem is the one bringing us, then we'll definitely be able to go.

"Their Shade Has Departed"

And therefore, just don't rebel against Hashem, which it seems like they're interpreting, and that's why they rip their clothing. Like similar to like the law, if someone hears someone cursing God or something like that, you rip your clothing, because you're hearing something blasphemy, this is against God. But if you will not blaspheme against God, you will not rebel against God, then don't be afraid of the people in the land. There are food, **sar tzilam mei'aleihem** [their shade has departed from them], it's very interesting.

And the Torah always says shade is protection, it's a constant of protection. Like the thing protecting them from the sun or from enemies has been lost. In other words, of course, this is a beautiful image, like there's a desert and like they went in the summer, it was very hot, and they said, look, these people have no shade, there's no trees, similar to like we talked about, of course, the Midrash noticed this connection between the etz [trees] and the tzeil [shade]. But of course, literally, the etz means trees there, and here it is talking about something more metaphorical.

But there's idea here where something like they're fully exposed to us, there's nobody protecting them. Okay, they have, they might have been the Anak [giants], but Hashem is stronger than these Anak. There's, this is not something you should be worried about. And it's also a report, right? This is also a way of them interpret their report. They said, we saw that they don't, they're not protected. We saw that they don't have protection. How did they see it? They saw it with the eyes of this promise that they believe that Hashem will bring them. But it's not only, we have to emphasize this, it's not only like, well, Hashem will help us against the reality, against nature, against what there is. No, they're saying that if you look with these eyes, if you're not rebelling against Hashem, you will see that they don't have anyone to rely on, really, these people.

The People's Rejection and Hashem's Appearance

But now, of course, Yehoshua and Calev's challenge and response here doesn't get accepted. The people, they want to stone them. That's how mad they are at this. They're thinking that they're just trying to fool them or something or something as weird is going on. They're not interested in listening to this.

And here Hashem intervenes. Hashem's glory, which probably means a cloud or something like that, is seen in the Ohel Moed [Tent of Meeting], like we saw very similar to the story that we had earlier by Miriam. Hashem gets revealed and is showing like, I'm here. I've noticed what's going on. It's not, I'm not, it's in front of me. I've heard the complaints.

Hashem's Anger and Proposal

And now Hashem, what does He say? He speaks to Moshe, similar to, again, over there, where He spoke to Aharon and Miriam. Now He's speaking to Moshe, not speaking to people. He's speaking to Moshe and He expresses His anger, His frustration to Moshe. And this is what He says. He says, **Ad ana yena'atzuni ha'am hazeh?** [Until when will this people blaspheme Me?] Until when will they not believe me, will they not trust in me? I've done so much for them. This is not like, they said, we should have died in the Midbar, we should have died in Mitzrayim. Remember, someone took you out of Mitzrayim. We got in here. How much more do I have to do for you, for you to trust the plan, to trust that the next step will also work?

Therefore, Hashem is so upset, He says, I will just kill them. I will destroy them in a plague. I'll make you Moshe to a greater nation. I'll make you bigger than them. In other words, Moshe, or maybe even Calev and Yehoshua, whoever, the only people that are trusting in me, I'll take care of you. Forget about all these people.

Moshe's Intercession

Now Moshe, similar to what He did in the Egel [Golden Calf], right? Hashem told him a similar thing about the Egel. Moshe intervenes with Hashem. Moshe is not agreeing with Hashem.

Moshe prays to Hashem and to destroy, to take away Hashem's anger and to say that this is not going to work.

The Argument from Egypt's Perspective

And he uses the same argument that he always uses. He says, oh, so the Mitzrayim will hear that you lost, right? The Mitzrayim, who, right? This is, well, this is like very interesting, but this is exactly Yehoshua and Calev's argument, right? Hashem is the one that took you out of Mitzrayim. Hashem's argument, you took out of Mitzrayim, you should trust that it will do further. And then Moshe says, okay, for the same reason, Hashem, you can't give up either. You don't expect the people to give up, right? Don't give up. I've taken you out of Mitzrayim, I've taken you through the Midbar, trust that the next step will work too. Well, could you give up also?

What will the Mitzrayim say? The Mitzrayim will tell the people. The Mitzrayim will maybe metaphorically or literally be talking to the people of Canaan. It's interesting, he says, I'm pretty sure that this means people of Canaan, although Moshe is not there. It's like, he's speaking as if we're already there. He's saying, they will say, look, we've heard that Hashem is with these people. Everyone can see your cloud go with them, your fire at night. And turns out you've killed them all as one person, like as if they're one person in one day, in one night, and all the people have heard of you. It's not like you can hide, you can pretend, oh, I never meant anything. No, everyone sees that you're very clear about showing that it's you, tzilam [their shade], right? The anan [cloud]. It's under your shade that they're going, right? You're protecting them.

The Nations Will Say Hashem Lacked Power

And they will hear, the Mitzrayim will say, oh, obviously, okay, maybe Hashem was stronger than us, but He's not stronger than Canaanim [Canaanites]. Hashem cannot bring them to the land. So He slaughtered them in the Midbar to get out of His promise to take them out of the land. So like, He slaughtered them in the sense of, there was a plague, maybe like, oh, something happened, I don't know. He couldn't fulfill His promise, therefore, this was His excuse, this was His answer.

The Brilliant Reversal

And this is Moshe's very strong argument against Hashem. And you'll notice the same thing, just like the Meraglim, like, notice, the Shearikot [?] of notice, wait, your people are saying that the Canaanim are stronger than Hashem. Moshe is saying, that is exactly what the truth would be, what the people will say, whenever someone says, people will say, this will be the reality, if you don't, you actually follow them. If you actually do what the Meraglim are proposing and kill them in the Midbar, which is exactly what they said, then it will be true.

Invoking the Thirteen Attributes

And therefore, Moshe finishes his prayer, he says, **ve'ata yigdal na koach Hashem** [and now let the power of Hashem be magnified], in other words, make your power strong, show that your power is stronger. And then he repeats, in the story of the Egel, when Hashem revealed Himself to them, He said, it's true, that you're a God of justice and a God of righteous anger, but you're also

So he slaughtered them in the sense of there was a plague, maybe something happened, I don't know. He couldn't fulfill His promise, therefore this was His excuse, this was His answer.

And this is Moshe's very strong argument against God. And you'll notice the same thing, just like the Meraglim — notice the parallel structure. The Meraglim said that the Canaanites are stronger than God. Moshe is saying, that is exactly what the truth would be, what the people will say. Whenever someone says "people will say," this will be the reality. If you actually follow them, if you actually do what the Meraglim are proposing and kill them in the Midbar [wilderness], which is exactly what they said — "if only we had died in the Midbar" — then it will be true. It will look like God couldn't do it.

And therefore Moshe finishes his prayer. He says **וַעֲתָה יִגְדַל נָא כַּח ה'** [power strong]. In other words, show that Your power is strong. And then he repeats what God told him in the story of the Egel [Golden Calf], when God revealed Himself to him. He said, God, You are a God of justice and a God of righteous anger, but You are also a God of being slow to anger, of being long to of doing chesed [kindness], — **אַרְךָ אַפַּיִם** [erech apayim] — anger of carrying people's sins. You can accept people's sins, You .could bear the burden of our sins

And yes **וְנָקָה לֹא יִנְקָה** [completely absolve] You do not forget, but remember — that God has time. God **אַרְךָ אַפַּיִם** [erech apayim] is also part of the can wait for four generations. Maybe in four generations there is a solution that can be found, where somehow God can win. And maybe there has to be some punishment for the people .not trusting Him — you can get that also

But right now — right now You have to forgive the people with **וְכַאֲשֶׁר נִשְׂאָתָה לַעֲמֵם הַזֶּה מִמִּצְרַיִם וְעַד הַנְּהָ** [Your great kindness, as great as Your kindness is Ve'asher nasata la'am hazeh]. And as You have carried this You've carried them until here, [people from Egypt until here] You can't give up now. You've carried them, and of course You knew that we're sinful, You knew that we're hard people, You knew that we're not trustful. You've carried us until now — .continue to carry us

God's First Response: Forgiveness with Consequences

And God agrees with him. God says **סָלַחְתִּי כְדַבְרְךָ** [Salachti] You've made a good. [kidvarecha — I have forgiven as you said] argument, you're right. I will forgive them as you've said, .according to your words, in your way

And this is God fulfilling the second part. Like I said, this doesn't mean that everyone is getting off scot-free. And He I swear by My life, as I, **חַי אֲנִי** [Chai ani — As I live] promises live. And I think this also means something like, you asked Me **וַיִּמְלֵא כְבוֹד ה' אֶת כָּל הָאָרֶץ** [veyimalei] to show My power, yes. Now **וַיִּמְלֵא חֶשֶׁבֶד הַשָּׁמַיִם עַל כָּל הָאָרֶץ** — and My glory will fill the So it's like, I'm swearing by My life, by My glory, [whole earth] .which will fill the whole earth now

The Oath: This Generation Will Not See the Land

That these people who've seen Me, who've seen My glory, who've seen My miracles that I did in Mitzrayim [Egypt] and the Midbar, and they've tried Me about ten times, they still **אִם יִרְאוּ** [im yir'u — if they will] don't listen to Me — I swear that ...the land that I swore their parents [see

The blasphemers, the people that blaspheme Me, will not see in other words, I swear that something will [im — if] **אִם** .her happen — that's the language of a swear. It doesn't have the ".other side here, "if they will happen

But the only exception will be My servant, Kalev, who has had he — **רוּחַ אַחֵרֶת** [ruach acheret] — a different spirit with him didn't go along with the Meraglim. He followed Me. I will bring him to the land, and his children, his descendants will inherit .it

Okay? So that's Hashem's response to Moshe: that okay, He will not kill everyone, but He swears that the people that have not trusted Him will not see the land that they don't trust Him to bring them to. Basically, they're going to get their wish in some sense.

And also, He makes an exception for Kalev. Of course, Yehoshua is not mentioned here, but maybe it's obvious — Yehoshua is going to be the leader later. So it's not really someone that needs an exception. Of course, he's on Moshe's side. But Kalev will have an exception, and he will get it. And of course, there's a story in Sefer Yehoshua which describes exactly this happening.

The Practical Instruction: Turn Back

And now Hashem says, so what will you do? Look, the Amaleki This is **בְּעֵמֶק** [ba'emek] — and the Canaanites are in the valley basically, again, literally what the Meraglim said, right? In the low part, in the Negev, that's where the Amaleki and the Canaanites are going to be. In other words, you can't go there. .So you're going to have to find a different way there

For tomorrow, turn around, go back to the Midbar, to the way of the Yam Suf [Reed Sea]. You're going to turn around, you're going to have to find a different way to go.

So in other words, in a certain sense, it's accepting the Meraglim's complaint, right? This is very interesting. And that's itself part of their punishment, right? A person's punishment is that he gets what he wanted. The Meraglim said, you can't go here, there's Amaleki and Canaanites. Hashem said, you're right. We could have taken you if you would have trusted, but you don't trust. Go back the other way. We'll find a different way. It will happen.

God's Second, Expanded Speech: The Details of the Punishment

And now there's another one, another moment, another speech that Hashem gives to Moshe and Aharon. And this is somewhat doubled. It seems to say similar things that He said before, but there's a question here: why are there these doublings? It's not the first doubling in the Torah, of course. But we can see that He adds a lot, a lot, a lot to this, to this promise, to this oath that He's swearing. He gives a very important detail, and He really fills out what He didn't really make clear before. He said the people that have not trusted Him won't see them, but it doesn't really explain what will happen. So here He does somewhat explain what will happen.

How Long with This Evil Congregation?

He says like this. First, He says the same thing that we said **עַד מָתַי לַעֲדָה הַרְעָה הַזֹּאת אֲשֶׁר הִמָּה מְלִינִים עָלַי** [Ad matai] before **לְעֵדָה הָרָעָה הַזֹּאת אֲשֶׁר הֵימָּה מְלִינִים עָלַי** — Until when are these bad congregations, these bad people who are Right? In other words, this is [?]complaining against Me Hashem saying exactly what He said before. Ten times they've ?tried Me. How much? How much more can this go on for I've heard them. And then it says, I've heard, right? This is again what we say the whole time. Hashem is saying, I didn't forget. It's not that you can complain and I don't notice. I hear,

I notice that complaints are in My ears, in My eyes, so to speak.

The Oath Made Explicit

Therefore, tell them. And He tells them the same oath I will do to you exactly what you spoke, [Chai ani — As I live] in My ears. And that's filling out what I said. I told you already before by saying, your corpses will fall in this desert. All of you, all of you who've been counted in the census from the twenty years and older, all of you who have complained against Me, all of your corpses will fall together

And I swear, אִם תָּבֹאוּ [im tavo'u — if you will come] to the land, besides — and here we do have Kalev and Yehoshua

The Children Will Inherit

And your children that you said that will be captive, that will that will become prizes of war — , [lavaz — prizes of war] לבֹנִי be I will bring them, and they will know the land which you have me'astem —]מֵאֲסַתֶּם not wanted, which you have been [rejected

But you, your corpses will die in this Midbar. Your children will be in the desert for forty years. In other words, this whole generation until you die, basically. It's saying, basically, you're going to die a natural death, in some sense. But you will have זְנוּתֶכֶם to wait for the next generation to come. They will carry basically, , [zenutechem — your faithlessness, your treason] ,until your corpse is finished, until you all finish dying

Why Forty Years?

And this will take, again, why forty years? I gave you a simple explanation: because forty years is basically the time that it takes for a generation to change. But also, there's a symbolism here. The amount of days — we said they came back after forty days. So the exact amount of days that you went and checked out the land, for that amount of days, one day per year, you will have to carry your sin and it will take that long to get to Eretz Yisrael.

And He finalizes with His signature Ani Hashem, אֲנִי ה' דִּבַּרְתִּי [dibarti — I, Hashem, have spoken] This is Me, Hashem, speaking. I promise, if not, if I will not do this to these people who are complaining, you will all die in the desert

Okay. I went a little fast here because I have to move on.

The Death of the Spies

And now, we have — this is Hashem's statement. And now we have the pasuk reporting, the narrator, so to speak, reporting that something, what they said, part of what Hashem said they will do, happened.

Of course, Hashem — Moshe succeeded with his prayer, with his intervention, that not all the people died, but some of the people, the specific people, did die. And it said, the people that in , [bamaggefah — in the plague] במִגַּפָּה Moshe sent, they died , [lifnei Hashem — before Hashem] לפני ה', exactly in a plague in front of Hashem. But Yehoshua ben Nun and Kalev, they survived

So apparently, the Meraglim themselves died, or maybe — yeah, the Meraglim themselves died, whether on the spot, or whether in general in the desert, and so on. But they died, but Yehoshua and Kalev survived.

The Failed Ascent: The Ma'apilim

Now, we have a very interesting story. So it's very interesting to see the structure. Like, on the one hand, they were not

courageous enough, they did not trust enough, and therefore they lost, they didn't — they got what they wanted, and didn't go. Now, on the other hand, that doesn't mean that that means you should just be rash and jump and do whatever you want and go even in the danger.

The People's Reversal: "We Will Go Up"

So what we see is, Moshe speaks distinctly to the people, and וַיִּתְאָבְלוּ הָעָם מְאֹד — they're very sad. They're in mourning .[vayit'ablu ha'am me'od — and the people mourned greatly] Now, in the mourning, they say, you know what? You were right. Hashem was right. We will just go, we'll just — well, they rosh hahar — the] ראש ההר woke up in the morning, they go to , [top of the mountain] עֵמֶק Again, the mountain — there's the , [emek — valley] har —]הר which is close to them, and then the , [mountain] which is where the land is. And they say, we're , [hinenu — here we are] הֲנִנוּ .going to go up to the mountain we're going to go up to the place that Hashem has promised us we made a mistake, we , [chatanu — we've sinned] הֲטָאֵנוּ .to go .said we can't go, we're going to go

Moshe's Warning: It's Too Late

And now, Moshe says, no, no, no, this is not what we meant. This is — maybe it means to say it's too late, or maybe it says Hashem already said, He already accepted your complaint. This is not how it works.

Moshe tells them , לְמָה זֶה אַתֶּם עֹוֹבְרִים אֶת פִּי ה' [lamah zeh atem] ovrim et pi Hashem — why are you transgressing the word of Hashem just told you to go back. That's very [?Hashem interesting. This is the first — this is like the second chance. Like, you can't go back. Once you've lost it, you've lost it, and Hashem sort of agreed with you, so now you're going to have to go with your new plan. We're not going to go with the old plan

So Moshe tells them, don't go up, because Hashem is not with you will — [ve'ein Hashem bekirbechem] וְאִין ה' בקרבכם you be destroyed in front of your enemies. The Amaleki and the Canaanite are there, you will fall on the sword. Because in ki al ken shavtem] , [other words] כִּי עַל כֵּן שָׁבַתֶּם מֵאַחֲרַי ה' me'acharei Hashem — because you turned away from Hashem is not with you , [following Hashem] .Hashem is not with you

The Theological Point: You Can't Always Return to Plan A

This is very interesting, because it's like against teshuvah [repentance]. We always assume that teshuvah means you can always get back. You can't always get back. Sometimes someone loses a certain opportunity. Hashem wanted to take them in a certain way, but now they decided to go a different way, now you're going to have to follow through this plan too. You can't go back to Plan A. Plan B is the plan now.

The Defeat

But they do go, and this is an interesting verb we're not clear what it means, but it means — [vaya'apilu] something like they overcame this challenge and went aron brit Hashem — the] אֲרוֹן בְּרִית ה' anyways. But Moshe and did not go with them. That's [Ark of the Covenant of Hashem] exactly what it means, if there is no Hashem near you

And they actually lost the battle. The Amaleki and the Canaanite, who were in that mountain, they came back and vayaktum ad haChormah — and] וַיַּכְתֶּם עַד הַחֹרְמָה they hit them They lost the battle, [they struck them down to Chormah which might mean either a place, or like lashon [the language] of] הָרָם , [cherem — destruction] .they destroyed them entirely

So these people — obviously not all the people — these people who went up, lost their battle, as Moshe said.

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